

Europäisches Patentamt

European Patent Office

Office européen des brevets



(11)

EP 1 243 503 A2

(12)

EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

(43) Date of publication:

25.09.2002 Bulletin 2002/39

(51) Int Cl.7: **B63C 11/22**

(21) Application number: **02004488.9**

(22) Date of filing: **27.02.2002**

(84) Designated Contracting States:

**AT BE CH CY DE DK ES FI FR GB GR IE IT LI LU
MC NL PT SE TR**

Designated Extension States:

AL LT LV MK RO SI

(72) Inventor: **Pietrelli, Nino**

16030 Sorì, Province of Genova (IT)

(74) Representative: **Porsia, Attilio, Dr.**

c/o Succ. Ing. Fischetti & Weber

Via Caffaro 3/2

16124 Genova (IT)

(30) Priority: **23.03.2001 IT GE010029**

(71) Applicant: **HTM SPORT S.p.A.**

16035 Rapallo (Genova) (IT)

(54) **Regulator for underwater breathing devices**

(57) Regulator for underwater breathing devices including a relatively hard material box-like body (1) having a pipe (2) for the connection with a mouthpiece, at least one air inlet duct (3) and at least one opening (4)

on which it is positioned one air exhaust valve (6); in said regulator the box-like body (1) is externally covered by at least one layer (9) of a suitably shaped relatively soft material.

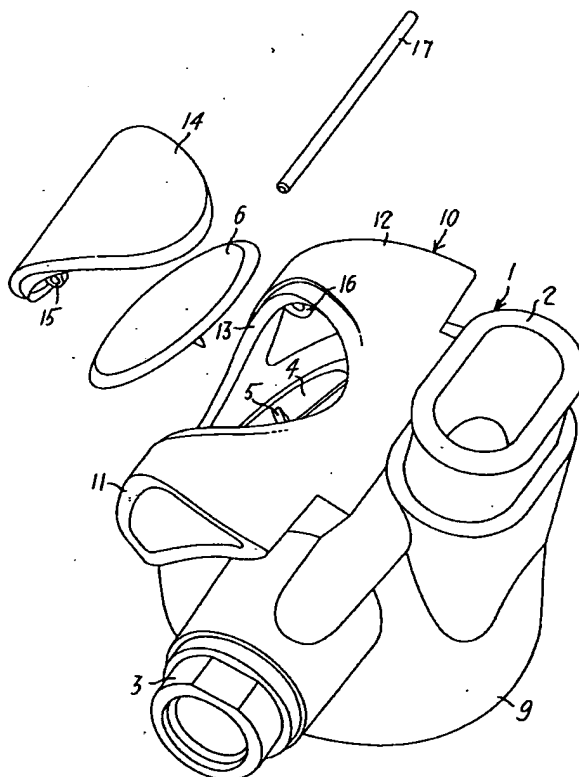


Fig. 2

Description

[0001] The present invention refers to the regulators for underwater breathing devices.

[0002] As well-known the body of the regulators for underwater breathing devices include a box-like member provided with a pipe for the connection to a mouthpiece, a duct for the inlet of the air from a source of compressed air, such as diving bottles, and an opening on which it is positioned an air exhaust valve.

[0003] To the box-like body of the regulator are connected exhaust ducts (or sleeves) made of a material different from the one of the box-like body and whose main task is to channel the air exhausted from the said exhaust valve. In US-A-4,784,129 a regulator is described in which said exhaust ducts are made of the same material of the box-like body of the regulator and integral with it, so to reduce the costs and the regulator maintenance problems, and to avoid that said exhaust ducts can disconnect and get lost during the diving. However said box-like body and the integral exhaust ducts are normally made using a relatively hard material, such as fiberglass or the like material, which proves to be discomforting, troublesome and little comfortable for the diver. Moreover said box-like bodies have standard shapes and colors, then turning out to be little personalizable by the diver.

[0004] The object of the present invention is to avoid the drawbacks of the known regulators by providing a regulator for underwater breathing devices comprising a box-like body made of relatively hard material and having a pipe for the connection with a mouthpiece, at least one air inlet duct and at least one opening on which it is positioned one air exhaust valve; said box-like body being externally covered by at least one layer of a relatively soft material suitably shaped so as to let uncovered the outer end of the mouthpiece pipe, the outer end of the compressed air inlet duct and to let the access to the air exhaust valve.

[0005] According to a further aspect of the present invention, said regulator includes a baffle of relatively soft material fastened to the covering layer of the box-like body and comprising exhaust ducts for the air coming out of the said exhaust valve.

[0006] Advantageously, the soft material, from which the baffle is made and the material forming the covering of the box-like body of the regulator, will be much more comfortable and easeful than the hard material used in the known prior art regulators. Moreover the diver will be able to choose the preferred color and shape for the covering layer of the box-like body of the regulator and for the baffle, said layer and said baffle being applied, through for instance a molding process, after the manufacture of the box-like body.

[0007] Further objects and advantages of the present invention will be better understood from the following description of one preferred embodiment of the invention, to be considered as a not limitative example and made

with reference to the enclosed drawings where:

- Fig. 1 is a perspective view of a known regulator for underwater breathing devices, without the exhaust duct which normally is mechanically assembled in a subsequent time.
- Fig. 2 is a perspective view of a regulator for underwater breathing devices provided with the soft covering according to the present invention.

[0008] In Fig. 1 a regulator for underwater breathing devices is shown, formed by a box-like body 1 including a pipe 2 for the connection to a mouthpiece (not shown), a duct 3 for the inlet of the air from a source of compressed air, an opening 4 having a support for an exhaust valve 6 (shown in Fig. 2) and a duct 7 for the bypass of the air from the compressed air inlet duct 3 to the connecting pipe 2 of the mouthpiece.

[0009] In Fig. 2 is shown the box-like body 1 to which it is applied, through for instance a molding process, a layer 9 of soft material. As it can be noticed, the layer 9 is shaped so to let an end part of the pipe 2 free for the following connection of the mouthpiece, to let free the end part of the inlet duct 3 for further elements connecting the compressed air source and finally to let unchanged the air exhaust opening 4. On this covering layer, on the air exhaust opening 4, is over-molded a baffle 10 made as well of a soft material, the same or different from the one of the covering layer 9. Said baffle 10 includes sideways two air exhaust ducts 11 and 12 and upwards an hole 13 provided with a removable closing cap 14, fit to allow the access and the eventual removal of the exhaust valve 6. On the inner layer of the cap 14 are provided two supporting rings 15 for an arm 17, said rings, when the cover 14 is positioned on the hole 13, aligned with two relative annular supports 16, each of them obtained by the side of the edge of said hole 13 and inside the upper surface of the baffle 10. The arm 17 then, to close said baffle 10, is inserted into the four holes of the rings 15 and of the annular supports 16.

[0010] Said baffle 10 can be, as mentioned before, made of the same or different soft material which the covering layer 9 is made of and moreover it can be changed in color, length and shape of the exhaust ducts 11 and 12 and other else as the diver using the present regulator likes. In case the material of the baffle 10 is the same of the layer 9, it will be fastened to the layer 9 at the same time of the application of said layer 9 to the regulator; in case said baffle 10 is made using a different material, it can be fastened to said layer 9 through suitable adhesive materials or other.

Claims

1. A regulator for underwater breathing devices including a box-like body (1) made of relatively hard material and having a pipe (2) for the connection

- with a mouthpiece, at least one air inlet duct (3) and at least one opening (4) on which it is positioned one air exhaust valve (6); **characterized in that** said box-like body (1) is externally covered by at least one layer (9) of a suitably shaped relatively soft material. 5
2. A regulator according to claim 1, **characterized in that** said layer (9) is fastened to the box-like body (1) through over-molding of the soft material which it is made of. 10
3. A regulator according to claim 1, **characterized in that** it includes a baffle (10) made preferably of the same material of the covering layer (9) of the box-like body (1) and including ducts (11, 12) for the exhaust of the air coming out from said valve (6). 15
4. A regulator according to claim 3, **characterized in that** said baffle (10) is fastened to said covering layer (9) through a over-molding process of the material which it is made of. 20
5. A regulator according to claim 1, **characterized in that** said baffle (10) is made of a material different from the one of the covering layer (9) and it is fastened to this last through adhesion. 25
6. A regulator according to claim 3, **characterized in that** said baffle (10) includes two exhaust ducts (11, 12) positioned sideways as to said valve (6), being said baffle (10) provided with an upper surface positioned in front of said valve (6) and provided with at least one hole (13) closed by a removable cap (14). 30 35
7. A regulator according to claim 6, **characterized in that** said cap (14) includes on its inner surface at least one supporting ring (15) which, in the positioning of said cap (14) onto the hole (13) obtained on the baffle (10), is aligned with at least two annular supports (16) each one obtained on the inner surface of said baffle (10) and near the side edge of said hole (13), being said annular supports (16) and said ring (15) passed through by a removable arm (17). 40 45

50

55

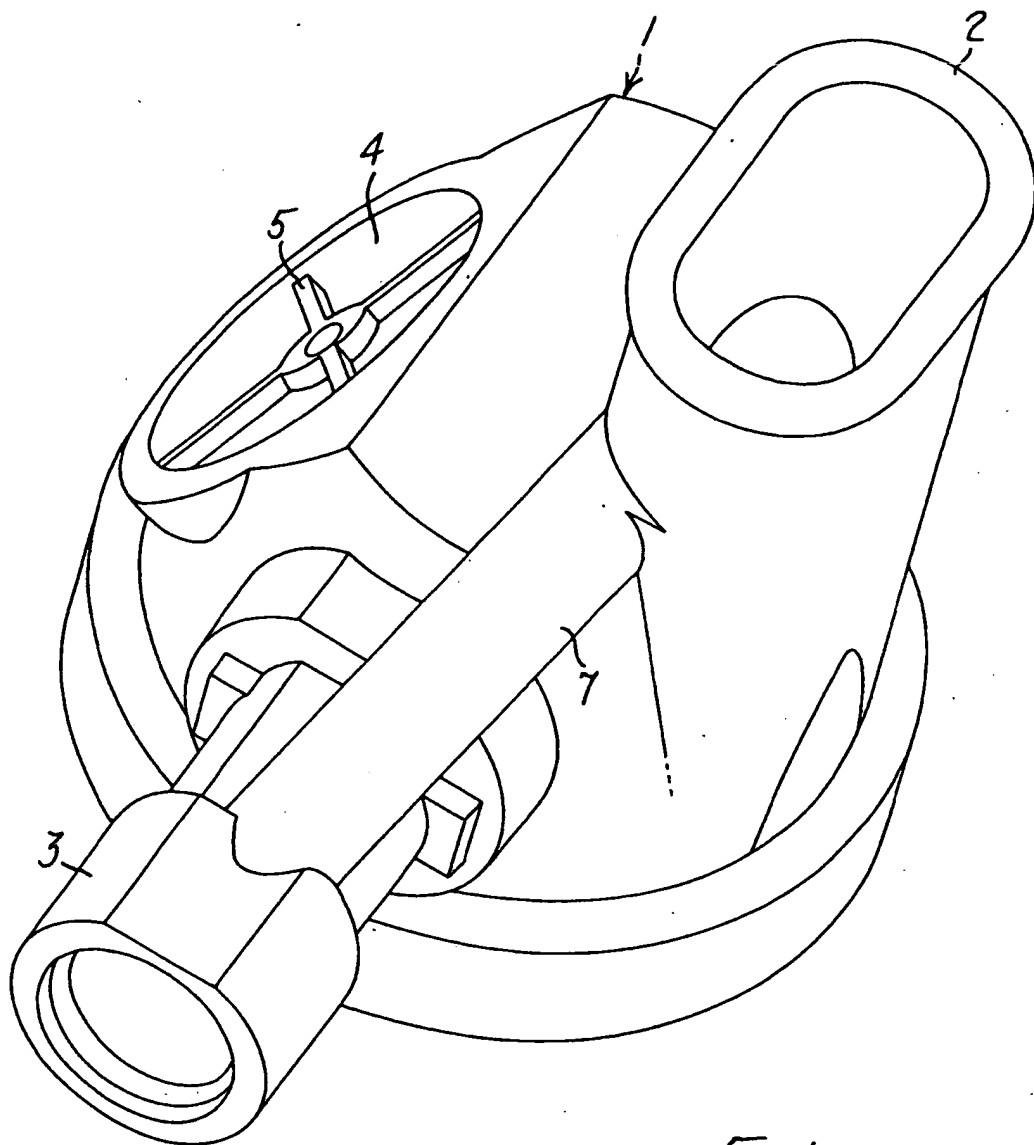


Fig. 1

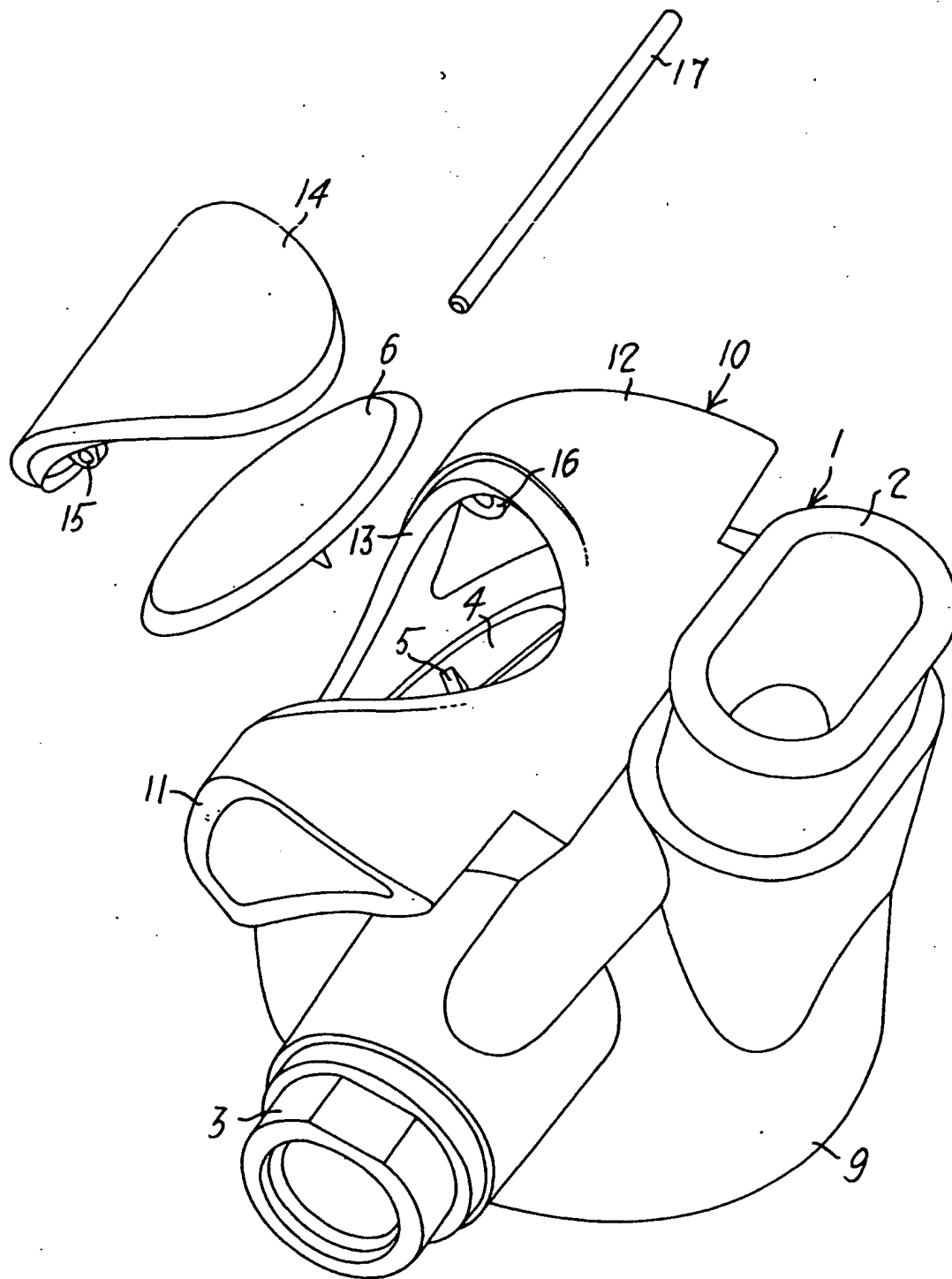


Fig. 2

**This Page is Inserted by IFW Indexing and Scanning
Operations and is not part of the Official Record**

BEST AVAILABLE IMAGES

Defective images within this document are accurate representations of the original documents submitted by the applicant.

Defects in the images include but are not limited to the items checked:

- ☐ **BLACK BORDERS**
- ☐ **IMAGE CUT OFF AT TOP, BOTTOM OR SIDES**
- ☐ **FADED TEXT OR DRAWING**
- ☐ **BLURRED OR ILLEGIBLE TEXT OR DRAWING**
- ☐ **SKEWED/SLANTED IMAGES**
- ☐ **COLOR OR BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOGRAPHS**
- ☐ **GRAY SCALE DOCUMENTS**
- ☒ **LINES OR MARKS ON ORIGINAL DOCUMENT**
- ☐ **REFERENCE(S) OR EXHIBIT(S) SUBMITTED ARE POOR QUALITY**
- ☐ **OTHER:** _____

IMAGES ARE BEST AVAILABLE COPY.

As rescanning these documents will not correct the image problems checked, please do not report these problems to the IFW Image Problem Mailbox.